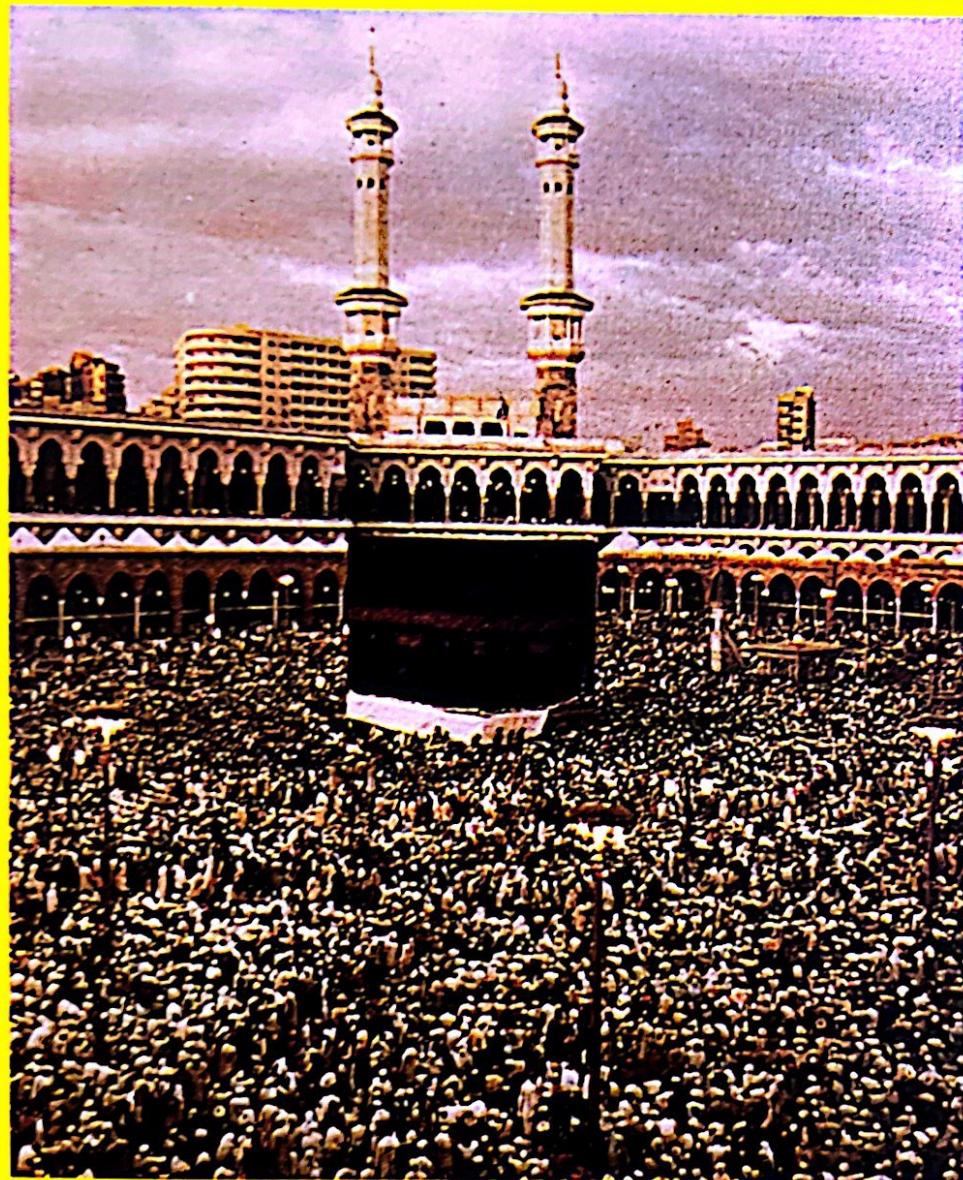


HAJJ AND UMRA

A Pocket Guide Book



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IN THE NAME OF ALLAH
the Beneficent, the Merciful

THE HAJJ

Literal meaning of Hajj. Hajj in Arabic language means to visit. People from all around the world travel to Makkah to visit the holy Haram and for this reason, this visit has been called Hajj.

Legal (Sharia) meaning of Hajj: Under Islamic legal meaning the word Hajj stands for such a comprehensive worship in which a muslim visits the holy place and performs certain specified rites and prayers.

OBLIGATIONS OF HAJJ

The Quran states in surah Ale Imran:

"And incumbent on mankind is pilgrimage to the House for that goodwill of Allah, on him who is able to find a way thereunto"

وَيَسُوْلُ عَلَى النَّاسِ حُجُّ الْبَيْتِ مِنْ أَسْنَاطِّ الْأَرْضِ وَسَبَّلَهُ

The haji was made obligatory for muslims in 9 Hijri. The same year Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him) sent a group of 300 companions to perform Hajj under the leadership of Abu Bakr (May Allah be pleased with him). The following year, 10 Hijri, the Prophet (PBUH) himself performed Hajj with a little over 100,000 companions. This was his first and the last hajj and is called 'Hajj Al Wida' (Farewell Hajj).

There are several traditions in which Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) has laid virtues of hajj.

The Prophet said, "One who performed hajj just to please Allah, and tried to save him from sins during Hajj period, he will return home like a newly born child free from all sins."

Another tradition states:

"Abu Huraira states that the Prophet said, "The reward for an acquitted hajj (Hajj Mabroor) is nothing except heaven." The scholars have defined Hajj Mabroor - "a hajj free from sins." Few scholars have also defined it, "Hajj Maqbool, i.e. accepted hajj".

IMPORTANCE OF HAJJ

Importance of Hajj is evident from the fact that its performance once is enough for the whole life. For this reason, scholars have emphasised that a haji should be very careful in performing Hajj.

ing hajj with all its requirements and should submit completely to Allah and His commands in this respect and thus become a true muslim. The felicitation of hajj is really a gift from Allah to His servant to purify himself fully, if not done so through other worships inspite of all his best efforts. At the same time, felicitation of hajj is the test of a haji whether he fully availed of the opportunity bestowed to him by Allah. The life of a haji after performing hajj and his later activities would be a clear pointer whether he had an acceptable hajj (hajj mabroor) or, he is a deprived person even though he apparently has gone through all prescribed rituals. One who has had opportunity of an acceptable hajj by the grace of Allah, comes back like a newly born child free from all sins. Therefore, it is very important for a haji to screen his intention (niyat) carefully before going for hajj and perform the hajj following fully the minute details of the prescribed rituals of hajj and try to obtain the reward intended of a hajj.

This is a fact that hajj has been made a model for perfection, kindly deeds, simplicity and purity. The haji has been ordained to purify himself from all worldly temptations, leave worldly desires, even refrain from sexual activities with his wife and keep himself away from all bad habits during hajj period. Miles before reaching the House of Allah, the Haram, a boundary line has been fixed where a pilgrim should change his

dress and wear Ihram, a couple of seamless sheets to resemble a beggar. All rich and poor, thus looking like the same, should enter the House of Allah with all humility, weakness and helplessness. After adopting Ihram blood shedding of human being and even of animal is forbidden. The war is also unlawful during the four months of hajj period, so that all roads to Makkah are free from fear and there is a feeling of amity all around. There is no fanfare or gaiety for a haji when he reaches the House of Allah. The only words that can be heard are:

“Here I am at Thy service, O Allah, Here I am at Thy service; Here I am at Thy service; There is no partner unto Thee; Here I am at Thy service; to Thee the glory, the riches and the sovereignty of the world. There is no partner to Thee”.

بَلَّيْكَ الْهُمَّ بَلَّيْكَ، بَلَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ لَا يَكُونُ
إِلَّا الْحَمْدُ وَالنِّعْمَةُ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكُ، لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ.

MEANING OF HAJJ AKBAR

The opinion of scholars is divided on the real meaning of hajj akbar. For some scholars, hajj akbar means 'youm al nahr'. Some of them believe it to be "Youm Arfa". The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Staying at Arafat is Hajj" -- الحج عرفة --

The Umrah is termed as 'mini haj'. According to Imam Thoori, "All days of the hajj are Haj Al Akbar".

HAJJ TERMINOLOGY

- 1- **IHRAM:** When a pilgrim recites Talbiah with the intention of performing Hajj or Umrah, certain things which though are lawful become proscribed for him as long as he remains in such a state. For this reason, this act is called Ihram. Symbolically the two seamless sheets which the pilgrim wraps after removing sewn clothes, are also called Ihram.
- 2- **ISTELAM:** The act of kissing the Hajar-al-Aswad (black stone) or touching it or Rukn Yamani by hand, is called Istelam.
- 3- **IZTIBA'A:** Removing the seamless sheet from the right shoulder and to pass it under the right armpit and put it over the left shoulder and thus keeping bare the right arm during Tawaf of Umrah.
- 4- **DAYS OF TASHRIQ:** To recite Takbir al Tashriq for five days from 9th to 13th Dhul Hijja.
- 5- **DAYS OF NAHR:** The period from 10 to 12 Dhul Hijja.

- 6- **TALABIYAH:** Full recitation of the declaration starting with Labbaik . . .

بَسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يَكُونُ الْحَقُّ

- 7-- **JAMRAT:** There are three sites in Mina where three huge pillars are erected; they signify satans. The one near masjid Khaif in the west is called, 'Jamratul Oula'; the other in the middle towards Makkah is called, 'Jamratul Wusta'; and the last at the end is called, 'Jamratul Uqubah or Jamratul Kubra'. Seven pebbles each are thrown at Jamrats in the order mentioned.

- 8- **DAM (ATONEMENT):** During the state of Ihram, if one commits an act which is proscribed, it becomes obligatory to sacrifice an animal for atonement of the error.

- 9- **HALQ:** To shave the head.

- 10- **RAMAL:** (Brisk walking) -- To walk briskly in the first three circuits of Tawaf.

- 11- **QASR:** To get a hair cut or clip some hair.

12- YOUM AL TARWIYAH: 8th of Dhul Hijja.

13- WUQOUF: Means to stay. During hajj, it denotes staying in Arafat and Muzdalifa at the appointed times.

MIQAT

Miqat has a very special significance during Hajj or Umrah. The boundary lines which the pilgrim or those who want to perform Umrah should not cross without adopting the Ihram are called Miqats. For the seaborne pilgrims from India, Pakistan and Yemen, the Miqat starts from Yalmalam (known as Saadia); the air travellers coming from Karachi or Bombay should adopt Ihram before embarkation because their aircraft enters the Makkah air space before landing in Jeddah. Failing to do this, they will be liable to offer an atonement sacrifice (Dam). The pilgrims who are visiting Medina first, need not adopt Ihram at the departure point. However, they should do so while coming from Medina to Makkah before crossing the village of Bir Ali. It is noteworthy to remember that recitation of Talbiyah begins from Miqat.

HOW TO ADOPT IHRAM?

The intending pilgrim should cleanse himself of all physical impurities before adopting the Ihram. If you need a haircut, get it done before adopting the Ihram. If you cannot take a bath due to certain inability, then perform the ablution, take off the reg-

ular sewn clothes and take up the Ihram dress. After this, he should perform two rakabs of nafil prayers and recite the Talbiyah three times. Please note that it is not desirable to render such prayers during sunrise, decline of the sun and during sunset.

IHRAM DRESS FOR LADIES

Ladies can adopt the Ihram wearing their regular dress except that they are not allowed to cover their faces during this period. However, they can veil their faces in such a way that the cloth does not touch their skin. Women in period or in a state of uncleanness can bathe or do ablution for adopting the Ihram. They should, however, perform the Tawaf and Sa'ee after being relieved of the uncleanness and after taking a proper bath.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN IHRAM RULES FOR MEN AND WOMEN

MEN:--

- Cannot cover their heads during Ihram
- Cannot wear any stitched clothing.
- Must recite the Talbiyah loudly.

WOMEN:--

- Must cover head but can uncover at the time of performing ablution.

- Can wear stitched clothes.
- Should recite Talbiyah in low tone.
- Cannot cover face; veil, if any, must not touch the skin of the face.

THE NIYAH (INTENT) IN WORDS

The declaration of Niyah (Intention) in words is needed only before adopting Ihram, as it was specially done by the Prophet (PBUH). There is no tradition available in record that Niyah in words should be declared before tawaf or other rituals of the hajj or umrah. Therefore, niyah in words is forbidden and to declare niyah loudly is even worse and is considered as an addition to Islam (Bida'at). After adoption of Ihram for hajj or umrah, recite Talbiah loudly three times.

بَيْتَكَ اللَّهُمَّ بَيْتَكَ، لَكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ لَكَ بَيْتَكَ،
إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالْعِزْمَةَ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكَ، لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ.

OBLIGATIONS OF IHRAM:

1. To adopt before or at the Miqat.
2. To refrain from all what is proscribed after adopting Ihram.

WHAT SHOULD THE PILGRIM DO ON REACHING MAKKAH:

Before entering the city of Makkah, the pilgrim should take bath as was done by the Prophet (PBUH) himself and when reach the House of Allah, the Grand Mosque, should step in with right foot first and recite as per sunnah:

سَمِعَ اللَّهُ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ
أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ وَسَلَامَةِ الْمَتَدِيمِ مِنْ
الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ، اللَّهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِي أَبْوَابَ
رَحْمَتِكَ.

There is no evidence of any special supplication by the Prophet (PBUH) for entering the holy Haram. After entering the Grand Mosque, when the pilgrim first sets his eyes on the House of Allah, he should recite 'Allahu Akbar', three times and supplicate:

”اللَّهُمَّ زِدْ بَعْثَتِكَ تَشْرِيفِيًّا وَتَعْظِيمِيًّا وَتَكْرِيمِيًّا
وَمَهَابَةً وَزِيَارَةً مَنْ سَلَّفَهُ وَكَرَمَهُ وَمَنْ حَجَّهُ
وَاعْمَرَهُ تَشْرِيفِيًّا وَتَكْرِيمِيًّا وَتَعْظِيمِيًّا وَبَرَّاً
اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ السَّلَامُ وَمِنْكَ السَّلَامُ فَحَيْثُ كَارَبَنَا
بِالسَّلَامِ“

"O Allah, please add to the sanctity, grandeur and excellence of this House, and also add to the respectability and honesty of the person who visits this House respectfully and with humility. O Allah, Thou name is Peace, Peacefulness is from Thee, keep us alive with tranquility."

There is no need for performing salutation prayer (Tahayyatu'l Masjid) after entering the Grand Mosque. The right salutation for the Haram is Tawaf. Therefore, start Tawaf immediately after supplication.

TAWAF

Meaning - Circumambulation around some object. In the context of Hajj and Umrah, it means the performance of seven circuits around the Ka'aba, the House of Allah.

REQUIREMENTS OF TAWAF

These are three:

1. To complete most of the circumambulations.
2. To do so inside the Grand Mosque.
3. To do it personally; on some vehicle in case of disability.

ESSENTIALS OF TAWAF

These are eight:

1. To be in a purified state, i.e. cleansed of minor and major impurities.
2. Prescribed dress.
3. Anyone who is able to walk, to do it by himself on foot.
4. To start from the right.
5. To include the 'hateem' in circumambulation.
6. To begin at the Hajar Al Aswad (Black stone).
7. To perform the complete tawaf.
8. Render two rakahs upon completion of the tawaf.

SUNNAH ACTS DURING TAWAF

(To follow the acts of the Prophet -PBUH)

1. Istelam
2. Iztibah
3. Ramal (in the first three rounds)
4. No Ramal (in the last four rounds)
5. Istelam during Sa'ee and Tawaf.
6. To face the black stone and raise hands like in takbir.
7. To face the black stone.
8. To render all rounds one after the other.
9. To have a clean body and dress, free from all impurities.

This is the method borne out in the Prophet's (PBUH) traditions. The people should walk briskly during the first three of the seven circumambulations. Follow this method for the first tawaf upon arrival, may it be for Umrah, Tammato'a or Qiran Hajj. Every round begins at the Black Stone.

The mahram (one in the state of Ihram) should ensure personal cleanliness and humility towards Allah. He should recite Quranic verses and extensively carry out dhikr (remembrance of Allah). There are no specified supplications for tawaf or Sa'ee; one can recite anything that comes to his mind. The various booklets that give certain supplications are only put together by some people without any proof of their being sunna. When the pilgrim faces the Rukn Yamani, he should recite "Bismillah, Allaho Akbar" and attempt to touch it with his right hand. If he cannot get near to it, one should not signal towards it nor recite Allaho Akbar there.

The following recital is recommended when traversing the space between Rukn Yamani and the Black Stone;
"O Allah, bless me with the pleasures of this world and the hereafter and save me from hell-fire".

رَبَّنَا مَا تَفَى لِذِيَّا حَسَنَةٌ وَفِي الْأَيْرَ وَحَسَنَةٌ وَفِنَاعَذَابَ الْأَنَارِ

REGULATIONS FOR PERFORMING LESS OR MORE CIRCUMAMBULATIONS IN TAWAF

If one makes eight rounds instead of the seven, then it is recommended to do six more to complete the second tawaf. This must be done even if the eighth was undertaken by mistake. However, if someone does eighth thinking he has done seventh, then he need not complete another Tawaf.

RULES FOR SA'EE

Sa'ee is the process of traversing seven times between the hills of Safa and Marwah, including briskly walking between the green points (now indicated by green lights). It begins at Safa and ends at Marwah.

CONDITIONS FOR SA'EE

1. Can only be performed while in Ihram for Hajj or Umrah.
2. Can be done on foot or in a wheel chair in case of disability. No one can deputise in any case.
3. Can be done only after completing Tawaf.
4. To start from Safa hill and end at Marwah hill.

DESIRABLE THINGS FOR SA'EE

If possible, try and climb Safa hill, face the Ka'aba and recite, "There is no god but Allah. He is the Greatest. There is none worthy of worship except Allah. He is One and has no partner. His is the sovereignty of the universe and all praises are due to

2. Staying in Arafat between the periods of receding sun on the 9th Dhul Hijja and sunrise on 10th Dhul Hijja for whatsoever duration.
3. Tawaf Ziarah, starting sunrise on 10th Dhul Hijja and sunset on 12th Dhul Hijja i.e. This Tawaf is done after getting the head shaved or clipping of hair.

If any of the three obligations is missed, the Hajj will be considered as incomplete or invalid.

ESSENTIALS OF HAJJ

1. Stopping at Muzdalifa.
2. Sa'ee.
3. Stoning the Jamrat at Mina.
4. To shave or clip hair (on the head).
5. Tawaf Wida (by non-residents of Makkah).

FIVE DAYS OF HAJJ AT A GLANCE

(8th through 12th Dhul Hijja)

FIRST DAY - 8TH DHUL HIJJA

Makkah residents can adopt Ihram within the city limits. This practice is proved by the Prophet (PBUH). Contrary to popular belief, he (PBUH) did not advise his companions to go to the Grand Mosque for adopting Ihram. Nor, did he (PBUH) direct them to perform Tawaf Al Wida before embarking for Mina. However, residents and non-residents alike must take

the proper bath and cleansing action, before adopting Ihram. Travelling to Mina is recommended before or after the sun starts waning on the 8th Dhul Hijja. It is also preferable to camp in Mina near Khaif mosque. Pilgrims should perform Dhuhra, Asr, Maghrib, Isha and Fajr prayers at Mina and the tradition is to shorten (Qasr) each of them. There is no other special instruction for this day except to recite the Talbiyah excessively.

SECOND DAY - 9TH DHUL HIJJA

Fajr prayer at Mina and after sunrise leave Mina for Arafat, on the way reciting talbiyah and duroud etc. It is against the Prophet's (PBUH) tradition to leave Mina before sunrise. Pilgrims should possibly camp in Nimra till the sun starts waning; the Imam should deliver his Sermon (Khutba) after midday, highlighting the importance of the day to the pilgrims. After the sermon, Dhuhra and Asr prayers shortened and combined should be held using one Adhan and two Iqamat al Sala. This is the prophet's tradition.

STAYING AT ARAFAT - REQUIREMENTS

One can stay in any place in the Arafat plain except the Batn-Urma valley, west of Arafat Mosque. At Arafat, render as much praise and prayers as possible, recite the talabiya and if possible, read Quran too. There is a tradition attributed to the Prophet (PBUH) that the best supplication that he (PBUH),

and prophets who preceded him, rendered at Arafat was, "There is no one worthy of worship but Allah. He is One and has no partner; His is the Kingdom (of the whole universe) and unto Him is due all praise; He gives life and causes death; In His hand is all good, and He has power over all things".

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْكَلْمَانُ
الْحَمْدُ لِيَحْيَى وَيَمِّتُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَوِيدِيرٌ

Also render praise and duroid for the prophet (PBUH) and ask for forgiveness from Allah. It was the Prophet's (PBUH) practice to repeat every prayer three times. This is a tremendous day. It is a day of forgiveness and blessings. Therefore, pilgrims should not let any moment slip by and keep busy in praise and prayers till sunset. The day of staying at Arafat is the most disappointing day for Satan because on this day Allah is proud of and very kind and merciful over his servants, pardons innumerable and set them free from hell.

SOME RULES FOR STAYING AT ARAFAT

1. On the 9th Dhul Hijja at Arafat, both residents and non-residents, should combine Dhuhr and Asr prayers and render them at Dhuhr time using one Adhan and two Takbirs.

2. Friday prayers are not allowed here.
3. Adhan should be called when the Imam seats himself on the sermon stand. He should deliver two sermons like Friday sermons explaining Hajj rules. After the sermon, Takbir is called out for Dhuhr prayer and upon completion immediately after, for Asr. Recitation of Quran in both the prayers, should not be loudly.
4. It is preferable to stand close to the Jabl Rahmat and facing the Ka'aba. However, climbing the hill is an improper practice and is an addition to Islam (Bida'at).
5. Men and women should neither stand together nor congregate.
6. Women in menstruation period can stay at Arafat.

DEPARTURE FOR MUZDALIFA FROM ARAFAT

- Leave for Muzdalifa at sunset in an orderly manner, reciting the talbiyah in keeping with the Prophet's (PBUH) practice.
- It is wrong to leave Arafat before sunset.
- Maghrib prayer is proscribed at Arafat today.
- On reaching Muzdalifa, combine Maghrib and Isha prayers in congregation with only single Adhan and Iqamat. Combine these prayers even if alone. Repeat Maghrib prayers, combine with Isha, if it has been rendered erroneously on the way before reaching Muzdalifa.
- Sunnah and Nafl prayers be rendered after Fard prayers.

- According to some scholars, the night at Muzdalifa is more sanctimonious than Friday night and Night of Power (Lailatul Qadr) and recommend that it should be passed in supplication and prayers.
- Pilgrims should recite the prayers they rendered at Arafat.
- The night halt here is essential. If anyone leaves Muzdalifa before sunrise without any valid reason, then a sacrifice for atonement (Dam) will be essential.
- Pilgrims must collect 70 reasonably sized pebbles (grain size) here for stoning the three Jamrats at Mina. In case he fails to do so, he may collect them there in Mina.
- It is wrong to collect pebbles in Muzdalifa before praying.
- Pilgrims should not leave this place before Fajr prayer. However, children and weak and infirm women may depart for Mina late at night. Traditions to this effect are quoted according to Aisha and Umm Salma (May Allah be pleased with them).

THIRD DAY -- 10TH DHUL HIJJA

- Leave Muzdalifa for Mina in an orderly manner reciting Talbiyah before sunrise but when the darkness of night has adequately receded. Pass quickly through the Valley Mazar because this is the place where Ashab Feel were punished.

- Upon arriving at Jamrat al Uqba, in Mina, stop reciting Talbiyah, stone it with seven pebbles. When throwing stones, raise the hands and say Allahu Akbar every time.
- The ideal time for Rami (stoning) today is between sunrise and waning of the sun.
- After stoning, sacrifice an animal. This sacrifice is essential for pilgrims doing Tamatto'a or Qiran Hajj and recommended for those doing Afrad Hajj. Now after sacrificing the animal, shave the head or clip hair and discard ihram.
- Now one can wear stitched clothes and use perfumes. However, sex is not allowed till after the Tawaf Al Ziarah.
- After completing the Rami, sacrificing the animal and getting hair cut or shaved, proceed to Makkah for the obligatory Tawaf al Ziarah. It is preferable to do so on the 10th Dhul Hijja. If anyone performs this after the due time, then he must render the sacrifice for atonement. The Tawaf Ziarah can be performed till the sunset of 12th Dhul Hijja.
- Anyone who missed the Sa'ee on the 8th Dhul Hijja, he can do it after the tawaf al ziarah. In this Tawaf also, brisk walking (Ramal) in the first three rounds should be done.
- Return to Mina from Makkah after the Tawaf al Ziarah on 10th Dhul Hijja. Staying at night at any place other than Mina is not recommended

FOURTH AND FIFTH DAY -- 11TH AND 12TH DHUL HIJJA

On the 11th and 12th Dhul Hijja when the sun starts waning (afternoon) stone all the three Jamratis; first the Jamrat al Oula, second Jamrat Wusta and third Jamrat Ukhra which is towards Makkah. If one could not go back to Makkah on 12th Dhul Hijja, he should stone the three Jamratis on the 13th before departing for Makkah.

By the grace of Allah, now your hajj is complete.

ISSUES REGARDING STONING

Pilgrims often commit such errors here that necessitate the sacrifice for atonement. It will be useful to note the following:

1. On the 10th Dhul Hijja, stone only the Jamrat al Uqba. It is not allowed to stone Jamrat al Oula or Jamrat al Wousta on 10th. It would be Bida'at, if someone is doing so.
2. Stoning is essential and those who miss it, must offer sacrifice for atonement.
3. Stoning is not allowed early morning on the 10th Dhul Hijja. The recommended duration is after sunrise and before waning of sun. It is not preferable but acceptable to stone between afternoon and sunset but not liked (Makrooh) after sunset.

4. A pilgrim after performing stoning required of him, can stone on behalf of children, the sick and infirm and pregnant ladies and also on behalf of those who cannot cope with the tremendous human tide at the points.

TAWAF AL WIDA (FAREWELL TAWAF)

Pilgrims should make the best of their stay at Makkah by engaging in prayers and supplication because the rewards are manifold. When he plans to depart, he should do Tawaf al Wida without indulging in brisk walking during rounds and should not do Sa'ee. After Tawaf, render two rakahs and supplicate to the heart's desire. Women in menstruation period or in a state of uncleanness are exempted from this essential item.

UMRAH: A MINI HAJJ

It can be performed at any time during the year upon adopting Ihram. It can be combined with Hajj. The Quran declares, "Perform Hajj and Umrah to please Allah".

وَإِنَّمَا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةُ لِلّٰهِ

VIRTUES OF PERFORMING UMRAH

From the many traditions enumerating the virtues of performing Umrah, three are quoted here:

1. Abdullah Ibn Masood (May Allah be pleased with him) states that the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) advised that Umrah and Hajj should be done together because these two drive out misery and sins thoroughly; drawing similitude to smelting of iron, gold and silver in an oven wherein the pure metal separates from all impurities. This tradition informs us that these acts of worship spell betterment for us, both in this world and the Hereafter, but one must be honest in these efforts which should be aimed to please Allah only.
2. The Prophet (PBUH) said that the reward of an Umrah performed during Ramadhan is equal to that of a Hajj.
3. Those who come for Hajj and Umrah are guests of Allah. He accepts their supplications and grants forgiveness when they ask for it.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HAJJ AND UMRAH

- The Ihram for Hajj and umrah is adopted in the same manner and involves the same obligations and essentials.
- Hajj is performed only during specified dates.
- Umrah can be performed around the year except during

five days i.e. from 9th to 13th Dhul Hijja. If the Ihram for umrah was adopted prior to this date, then it is allowed to perform the umrah during the forbidden period.

OBLIGATIONS OF UMRAH

1. Adoption of Ihram.
2. Tawaf.

ESSENTIALS OF UMRAH

1. Sa'ee between Safa and Marwah.
2. Shaving the head or clipping the hair after Sa'ee.

VISIT TO THE PROPHET'S MOSQUE, IN MEDINA

Visit to the Prophet's Mosque at Madinah al Munawwarah, before or after the Hajj, is a Sunnah. Abu Huraira (May Allah be pleased with him) quotes the Prophet, (PBUH) as saying, "A prayer in my mosque is better than thousand prayers in other mosques excluding the Grand Mosque (at Makkah).

Abdullah Ibn Zubair (may Allah be pleased with him), quotes from the Prophet (PBUH), "A prayer in my mosque is better than thousand prayers in other mosques excluding the Grand Mosque where a single prayer is better than one hundred prayers at my mosque".

Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) states from the Prophet as saying "A prayer in my mosque is better than thousand prayers in other mosques excepting the Grand Mosque. And a prayer at Grand Mosque is better than one hundred thousand prayers at any other mosque."

When you enter the mosque step in with your right foot first and recite, "In the name of Allah, Peace and Blessings be on His Prophet. I seek the mercy of Allah and the protection of His Might and Majesty against the evil Satan. O' Allah, open the gateway of Your Mercy for me".

سُبُّوْلُ اللَّهِ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُوْلِ اللَّهِ أَعُوْذُ
بِاللَّهِ الْعَظِيْمِ وَبِوْجُوهِهِ الْكَرِيمِ وَسُلْطَانِهِ الْمُتَدِيْنِ
مِنَ السَّيِّطَانِ الرَّجِيْمِ أَلَّهُمَّ افْتَأْتِحْ لِيْ بَوْبَابَ
رَحْمَتِكَ

This is the same prayer one recites upon entering any mosque because no special recital is ordained for this occasion.

Render two rakahs of Nafl after entering the mosque, calling on Allah to shower His blessings in this World and Hereafter. It is preferable to perform this prayer in Riyad al Jannah be-

cause the Prophet (PBUH) said, "The area between my residence and my sermon stand is one of the heavenly gardens.

After praying, visit the graves of the Prophet (PBUH), Caliph Abu Bakr and Omar. Stand before the grave of the Prophet (PBUH) reverentially and softly convey salutes (Salam). "As-salam Alaika Ya Rasool Allah Wa Barakatuhu".

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا رَسُوْلَ اللَّهِ وَرَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ

Abu Huraira quotes the Prophet (PBUH) in Abu Dawood, "When someone renders his respects (Salam) for me, Allah restores my soul so much so I reply to his greetings".

Allah directs the believers to convey their praise and salutations for the Prophet (PBUH).

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّو عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا وَسَلِّمُوا

Also convey salutations to Abu Bakr and Omar (May Allah be pleased with them) and pray for them. Abdullah Ibn Omar (May Allah be pleased with him) when saluting the Prophet

(PBUH) and his companions was saying nothing more than this, "Assalamo Alaika Ya Rasool Allah, Assalamo Alaika Ya Abu Bakr, Assalamo Alaika Ya Ibtaah (My Father).

السلام عليك يا رسول الله، السلام عليك يا أبي بكر، السلام عليك يا ابناه

Visit to graves excepting the Mausoleum of the Prophet (PBUH), is not allowed for the women. The Prophet (PBUH) condemned women who visited the graves and those who built mosques over graves or lit lamps over them.

Try to render five daily prayers in the mosque and also devote as much time possible for Nafl (Elective Prayers) and remembrance as long as you are there.

It is highly desirable to perform Nafl prayer at Riyad Al Jannah. However, for the Fard prayers, try to seek a place in the first row because reward in the first row is highest. There are many traditions to this effect. One of them quotes the Prophet (PBUH) as saying, "If people know how great is the reward in Adhan and in standing in the first row, space would be available by ballot". In another tradition, the Prophet (PBUH) is re-

ported to have said, "The one in the last row keeps receding so much so that Allah sends him to end of the Hell".

Caliph Omar (May Allah be pleased with him) used to encourage people to stand on the right side of the row. In the first construction of the Prophet's mosque, the right row was outside Riyad Al Jannah. This means that attaining the first and right row is more desirable than seeking a spot in Riyad Al Jannah and being constantly in these positions is more favourable than being regular at Riyad Al Jannah.

It is not permissible to touch or kiss the windows or grills of the Prophet's mausoleum. If anybody is doing it, he is committing Bida'at. It is also unlawful to request the Prophet (PBUH) to help overcome difficulties, find cure, etc. Such matters are Allah's jurisdiction and asking them from the people who have passed away, is tantamount to making them Allah's partners (Allah may forbid) and to worship one other than Allah.

Islam is based on two principles, First to worship One Allah who has no partner, and the second, to worship in accordance with the guidance given by His Prophet (PBUH). This is the true essence of the declaration (Shahada)."

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

There is no god but Allah and Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) is His messenger.

It is also unlawful to seek the intercession of the Prophet (PBUH) because the right of intercession belongs to Allah alone. Allah declares: "Announce that all intercession belongs to Allah alone"

قُلْ لِلّٰهِ أَنْشَفَهُ بِحِلْمٍ

Prophets or others cease to exercise the special powers Allah may have granted them, once they die; except for what is ordained. Abu Huraira is quoted in Sahih Muslim, that the Prophet (PBUH) said: "When a person dies, all his actions cease except on three counts -- the continuing good deeds he may have done, the knowledge that can be of use to others, and a virtuous righteous progeny (off-spring) who prays for him after his death."

When the Prophet (PBUH) was alive, he had the authority to intercede and this will again become valid on the Day of Judgement. However, this authority is invalid during the period from his demise to the Day of Judgement. It is true that the Prophet (PBUH) resides in his grave with a life after death.

(Hayat Barzakh) which is definitely better than the one granted to martyrs. But it is not the same when he was alive, nor it is like what it will be on the Day of Judgement. The truth about this state of existence i.e. life after death in Barzakh is known to Allah alone. The tradition pointing out to this state of existence reads, "When someone salutes me, Allah returns my soul and I reply to such salutations".

This means that he is not alive and his soul is not in his body but is returned to it every time someone salutes him.

There are many evidences about his death in the Quran and Traditions and all scholars have agreed on this issue. But this death is not a hindrance to this special existence just as in the case of martyrs. Allah declares.

وَلَا تَعْنِيَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتُلُوا فَسَبِيلًا لَّهُ أَمْوَالُهُمْ نَابِلَ حَيَاةً عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ
يُنْذَفَقُونَ

It was necessary to explain this issue in such detail because misunderstanding has led many to indulge in assigning partners to Allah and in worshipping the dead.

Many visiting the Prophet's grave, talk there loudly and linger on. This is improper because Allah has ordained that we should not raise our voice in the presence of the Prophet (PBUH). In Surah Al Hajarat, V.2, it is stated, "O Ye who believes, raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor shout when speaking to him as ye shout to one another, lest your works be rendered vain whel ye perceive not. Lo, they who subdue their voices in the presence of the messenger of Allah, those are they whose hearts Allah hath proven unto righteousness. Theirs will be forgiveness and immense reward".

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذْ نَفَعُ أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَرَفَقَ
صَوْنِيَّتِي وَلَا تَجْهَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَالْفَوْلِ كَبِيرٌ بَعْضُكُمْ لَيَعْلَمُ إِنْ تَجْهَرَ
أَغْمَلُكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ ① إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَعْصُونَ أَصْوَاتَهُمْ إِنَّهُمْ عَنَّا
رَسُولُ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اللَّهُ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِتَفْوِي لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ
وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ②

Also, if people insist on congregating near the grave, and repeat salutations, the spot will become crowded and noisy which is most undesirable to Allah as indicated in the preceding verses. The Prophet (PBUH) commanded our respect in his life time and also commands the same after his death. Therefore, it does not behove muslims to indulge in such ill manners. Similarly, it is also not correct to raise the hands in supplication near the Prophet's grave but only an innovation. Ali Bin Hussain Zain Al Abedin (May Allah be pleased with him) once saw a person supplicating at the Prophet's grave, asked him to stop and said that 'I am going to tell you a tradition which I heard from my father who heard this from his maternal grand father, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), "Do not make my grave a place of festivity nor turn your homes into graves. Convey me your salutations because they will reach me from wherever you may be". It is also not correct to adopt a posture of humility like folding the hands on the chest or like when one prays when conveying salutation to the Prophet (PBUH) or to a person in power. This is because all humility and homage is due to Allah alone. Many scholars have cited on the authority of Hafiz Ibn Hajar (May Allah be pleased with him) that people who prostrate before the grave or mumble their salutations are following the ill innovations (bida'at) of the past. And such practice does not befit a Muslim because he thus adds to the religion which is not ordained. If he does so,

he will not be conveying his love and respect for the Prophet (PBUH) but rather acting against him. Imam Malik (May Allah be pleased with him) disliking such acts declared that Muslims of the later period will find salvation and guidance in the way their predecessors found; that was the path charted out by the Prophet (PBUH), his rightly guided Caliphs, his companions and their followers. May Allah bless muslims with such wisdom and guidance so that they attain blessings in this world and hereafter.

VISIT TO THE PROPHET'S GRAVE IS NOT ESSENTIAL

The visit to the Prophet's final abode (Mausoleum) at Madina is not a part of Hajj rites, as misunderstood by some. However, it is desired to visit the grave if one visits the Prophet's mosque. In fact, it is not correct for those who live outside Madina to declare an intent to undertake journey to Madina solely to visit the grave. However, they can do so to pray at Prophet's mosque.

When in Madina, not only visit the Prophet's grave but also visit the graves of other revered people. The visit to the Prophet's grave and to the graves of his two companions is part of the visit to the holy mosque. There is a tradition attributed to the Prophet (PBUH), "Travel (is allowed) for visiting only three mosques -- the Grand Mosque (at Makkah), my

mosque and the Al Aqsa Mosque". If travel had been ordained for visiting any grave, he (PBUH) would have advised Muslims to do it. In fact, he asked people to refrain from travel except in the case of the three mosques and also advised not to turn his (PBUH) grave into a ceremonial site nor turn their homes into graves but to convey their salutations to him (PBUH) wherever they might be, as salutations will reach him (PBUH). Those who call the visit to the grave of the Prophet (PBUH) a must, are really making his (PBUH) grave a place of festivity for which the Prophet (PBUH) himself was afraid of and warned his companions. Most of the Muslims have deviated from the right path because of this wrong belief.

Traditions quoted to support this wrong belief are weakly documented. Learned scholars have warned against the suspicious nature of these traditions. Therefore, it is not correct to base our belief and action on those weak traditions. Few from the many such weak traditions are quoted below for the guidance of the pilgrims so that they are not misguided by these traditions:

1. One who performed Hajj but did not visit me, has been unfair to me.
2. One who visited me after my death, his visit will be considered as visiting me in my life time.

3. One who visited me and my father Ibrahim in the same year, I guarantee him heaven from Allah.

Hafiz Ibn Hajar (May Allah be pleased with him) points out to these weak traditions and states that if these traditions were genuine and had any substance, then the companions of the Prophet (PBUH) would have acted in accordance with them. In fact, they would have advised his followers to do the same. The truth is that after the death of the Prophet (PBUH), the source of guidance is his (PBUH) companions because they received the guidance first hand.

Similarly, the following tradition concerning forty prayers at the Prophet's mosque has also been found weak by scholars, notably amongst them is the famous scholar Sheikh Mohammad Nasser El Din Albani. He doubts the authenticity of this tradition.

The weak tradition reads:

"The Prophet (PBUH) said that one who performs forty prayers continuously in a way that even one time prayer is not missed, he is acquitted from the hell-fire acquitted from torture and such a man is free from hypocrisy."

VISITS TO QUBBA MOSQUE AND BAQI'A

Visitors to Madina are recommended to pray at the Qubba mosque as per tradition quoted by Abdullah Ibn Omar (May Allah be pleased with him), "The Prophet (PBUH) used to visit Qubba mosque either riding or on foot and used to render two rakah of Nafl. Sahl Ibn Haneef quoted the Prophet (PBUH) as saying, "Anyone who performs ablution at home and comes to pray at Qubba mosque, will get reward equal to an Umrah.

Similarly, it is desirable practice (Sunnah) to visit Jannah al Baqi'a and the grave of Hamza (May Allah be pleased with him). The Prophet (PBUH) used to do so and advised, "Visit the graves, these remind you of the Hereafter". He (PBUH) guided the companions to recite when visiting the graves: "O Believers and residents of the Muslim-homes, peace be upon you. Allah willing, we will meet you and we seek Allah's pardon for you and for ourselves.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ الدِّيَارِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَالْمُسَمِّينَ وَإِنَّ سَأَلَ اللَّهَ بِكُمْ لَا حَقُوقَنَّ،
نَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ لَكُمُ الْعَافِيَةَ.

Abdullah Ibn Abbas is quoted in Tirmidhi that the Prophet (PBUH) while passing by a graveyard in Madina, turned his face towards it and said, "O people in the graves, Allah may grant you peace and forgive you and us, you have gone there before and we will follow you."

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ يَا أَهْلَ الْقَبْوَرِ يَخْفِرُ اللَّهُ لَنَّا وَأَنَا
وَأَنْتُمْ سَلَفَنَا وَنَحْنُ بِالْأُثْرِ

All these traditions go to establish that visits to graves remind us of our Hereafter-life, but at the same time it is a great transgression to visit these sites to seek intercession or help in material gain or relief from ill-health. This is Bidat. Neither Allah and His Prophet (PBUH) ordained us to do this nor his (PBUH) followers and companions followed this practice, but, this action is from those dons which the Prophet (PBUH) asked muslims not to do.

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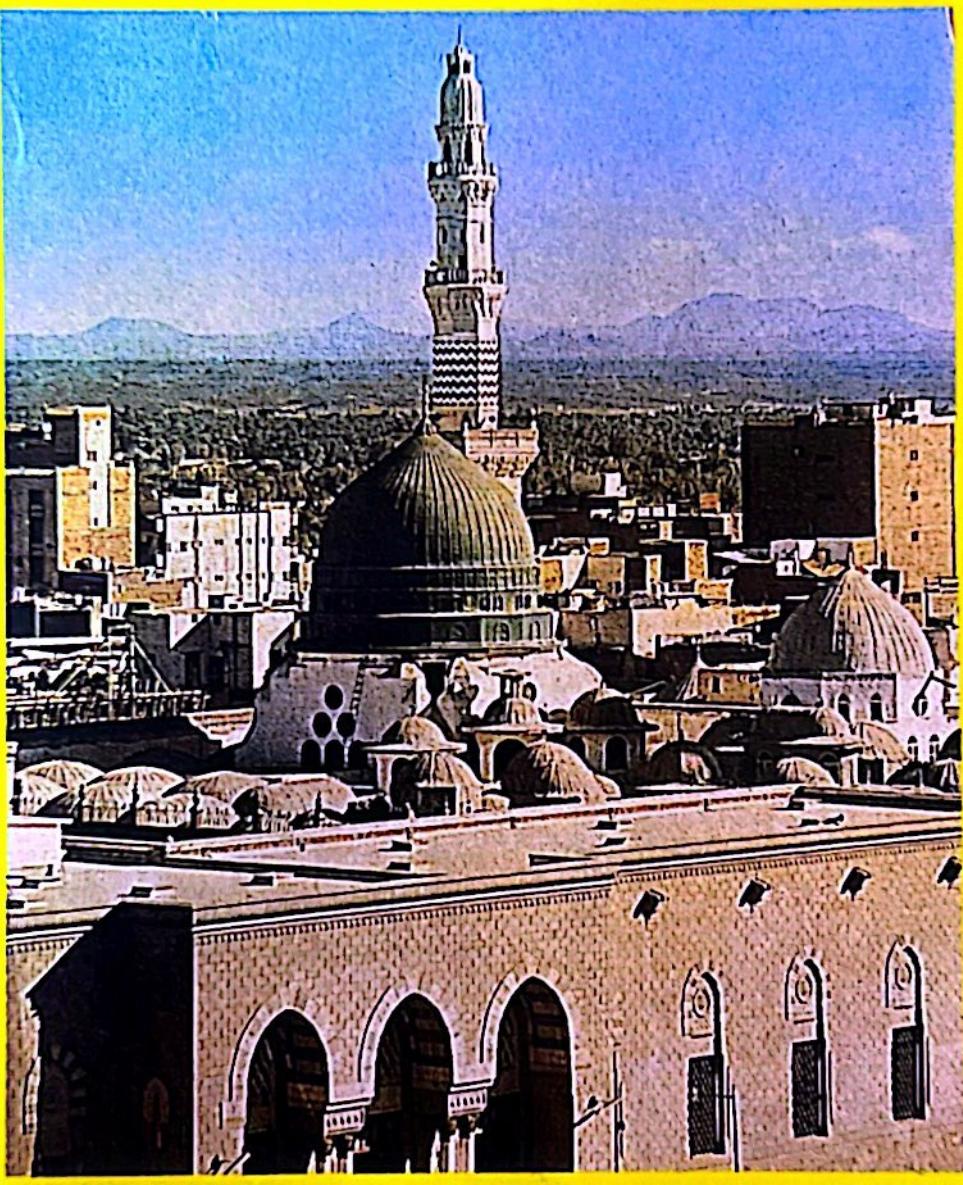
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